

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 051209

73

ORIGIN EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12

DPW-01 IO-12 EUR-25 OMB-01 T-03 AID-20 /141 R

DRAFTED BY EA/ P: STAFF: PP

3/20/73 EXT 22538

APPROVED BY EA/ P: AHROSEN

----- 104629

R 202203 Z MAR 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

USDEL FRANCE

CINCPAC

UNCLAS STATE 051209

E. O. 11652 N/ A

TAGS: PFOR, XC, US

SUBJECT: MARCH 20 INDOCHINA PRESS SUMMARY

1. NYT' S FLORA LEWIS REPORTS FROM PARIS ON OPENING OF GVN- PRG POL TALKS, SAYING GVN STRESSES NEED FOR QUICK AGREEMENT ON MODALITIES OF ELECTING AND PRG CALLING FOR ATMOSPHERE OF FREE POLITICAL COMPETITION FIRST. GVN ALSO CALLS FOR WITHDRAWAL OF NVA. LEWIS DESCRIBES GVN' S DAN AND PRG' S HIEU AS MEN OF SUBSTANTIAL AUTHORITY. HIEU TELLS NEWSMEN HE HAS " FULL POWER" TO NEGOTIATE. WP REPORTS NO POLEMICS AT MEETING BUT SEES SNAG OVER WITHDRAWAL DEMAND. CSM' S OKA SAYS GVN MAY NOW BE MORE FLEXIBLE ON ITS EARLIER DEMAND THAT ELECTIONS TAKE PLACE ONLY WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF RVN CONSTITUTION. MEANWHILE, US- DRV JEC TALKS IN SECOND SESSION AT HOTEL MAJESTIC WITH NEITHER SIDE, ACCORDING LEWIS, APPARENTLY IN HURRY TO " GET DOWN TO HOW UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 051209

MUCH AND WHAT" US WOULD VEND NVN.

2. US- GVN- PGR- DRV REPORTEDLY NEAR AGREEMENT IN JMC ON

C ON

PLAN FOR YEARS- LONG SEARCH FOR US MIA AND OTHERS BELIEVED DEAD. 1300 MIA LISTED IN INDOCHINA. US ALSO ASKS COMMUNISTS IN JMC FOR LIST OF LAST POW BATCH AND DATE OF RELEASE (NYT). RICHARDSON SAYS RELEASEES WHO COME BACK WITH INFO ON MIAS ARE REPORTING IN MOST CASES MIA ARE DEAD (WP). VC ANNOUNCE IN SAIGON ALL REMAINING AMERICANS THEY HOLD WILL BE RELEASED SUNDAY; NO WORD YET FROM DRV ON MEN STILL HELD IN HANOI. NYDN' S FRIED SAYS US HAS ASKED DRV FOR EARLY RELEASE OF REMAINING MEN BUT NO RESPONSE RECEIVED. MEANWHILE, ARVN SEARCH CENTRAL VN FOR CRASHED AIR VIETNAM PLANE WITH 62 ABOARD PLUS TWO AMERICAN CREWMEN.

3. GVN THREATENS RENEW MIL OPS TO RELIEVE TWO OUTPOSTS UNDER COMMUNIST SIEGE NORTH OF SAIGON IF ICCS REFUSES INVESTIGATE. VC SAYS ANY ARVN RELIEF EFFORT WOULD BE MET WITH FORCE. WESTERN SOURCES IN SAIGON SEE THIS AS CRUCIAL TEST FOR ICCS (NYT, WP, SUN, PHINQ).

4. FRIEDHEIM SAYS MILITARY SUPPLIES AND MEN CONTINUE COME DOWN HO TRAIL. MOST OF TANKS AND ARMORED VEHICLES SEEN COMING DOWN DURING FIRST FEW WEEKS AFTER C- F HAVE ARRIVED AT BORDER OR HAVE ENTERED SVN (NYT). SUN' S KEAT SAYS US OFFICIALS SAY FLOW APPEARS DIMINISHING, ALTHOUGH EVIDENCE NOT CONCLUSIVE THAT HANOI HAS STOPPED INFILTRATION. OTHER SOURCES SAY SUPPLIES APPEAR TO HAVE STOPPED GOING INTO UPPER END OF PIPELINE IN RECENT DAYS. MILITARY ANALYSTS SAID TO BE DIVIDED OVER NATURE OF MIL THREAT. NYDN' S CARTER REPORTS US INTELLIGENCE HAS DETECTED SLOWDOWN IN FLOW SINCE PRESIDENT' S WARNING. ALTHOUGH SOME MEN AND SUPPLIES STILL MOVING INTO SVN FROM BOTTOM OF TRAIL, " TOP OF THE PIPELINE HAS BEEN ALMOST PHASED OUT," SOURCE SAYS. SENIOR OFFICIAL SAYS THERE SOME EVIDENCE FLOW MAY BE TAPERING OFF AND US SHOULD KNOW MORE SURELY IN TWO- THREE DAYS. NOT KNOWN WHETHER DIMINISHED FLOW DUE PRESIDENT' S WARNING OR WHETHER IT WAS NEARING COMPLETION ANYWAY. BRAY SAYS US HAS " CONVINCING EVIDENCE" OF SUPPLIES INTO SVN
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 051209

THROUGH OTHER THAN AUTHORIZED ENTRY POINTS (NYDN).

5. SHARP RETURNS TO OTTAWA AND PROMISES " VERY QUICK" DECISION ON CANADA' S ICCS FUTURE. SAYS TRIP CONFIRMED REPORTS ICCS NOT WORKING WELL, BUT " WHOLE SERIES OF GOVERNMENTS" HAVE ASKED CANADA TO REMAIN ON ICCS (NYT, WP).

6. FSO PHILIP W. MANHARD RETURNS TO WASHINGTON AND

BETHESDA NAVAL HOSPITAL CHECK- UP. HIGHEST- RANKING
US CAPTIVE OF VC THINNER THAN FRIENDS REMEMBER HIM,
BUT COMPOSED AND RUDDY AT ANDREWS AFB WELCOMING CEREMONY.
PAYS SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO " TRUE COMRADESHIP AND WARM
FRIENDSHIP" OF FELLOW POWS -- AMERICAN, FILIPINOS, GERMANS,
AND CANADIANS (WP).

7. EIGHT WEEKS SINCE C- F, SUN' S ISAACS SEES NO REAL
BATTLEFIELD TRUCE IN VN AS OPPOSING FORCES CONTINUE
FIGHT IN EVERY REGION AND PEACE- KEEPING MECHANISMS
SUCCEED ONLY IN ARRANGING POW RELEASES. FRUSTRATION
RISING IN SAIGON OVER NEAR- TOTAL FAILURE OF COMPLICATED
C- F MECHANISM INVENTED BY HAK AND THO. JMC HASN' T
COMPLETED SINGLE INVESTIGATION. NO SIGN YET PRG PLANS
TO FILL OUT ITS INSPECTION TEAMS AT AUTHORIZED
LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT COUNTRY. GVN THREATENS RENEW
HOSTILITIES TO RELIEVE BESIEGED OUTPOSTS. GVN CHARGES
COMMUNISTS WITH 7,689 VIOLATIONS COSTING NEARLY 17,000
LIVES ON BOTH SIDES; TRA CHARGES GVN HAS FIRED 974,630
SHELLS IN 46,000 VIOLATIONS.

8. CSM' S SOUTHERLAND EXAMINES ICCS OPS IN GIONG TROM
DISTRICT TOWN, FINDS LITTLE OR NO RECORD OF ACCOMPLISH-
MENT, AND SAYS THIS TYPICAL OF ALL 26 ICCS OUTPOSTS
IN COUNTRY.

9. GKR ARRESTS MEMBERS OF ALLEGED " SUBVERSIVE NETWORKS"
IN PP OF " ROYALIST INSPIRATION," ACCORDING INFORMATION
UNDERSECRETARY HUONG. MANY STRIKING TEACHERS AND
STUDENTS SAID TO REJECT GKR ATTEMPT TO LINK POTRA
BOMBING INCIDENT WITH GRENADE KILLINGS SATURDAY DURING
STRIKE MEETING, SAYING THIS DESIGNED BREAK STRIKE.
SIXTEEN MEMBERS OF ROYAL FAMILY SAID TO HAVE BEEN MOVED
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 051209

TO HOUSE ARREST IN FORMER QUEEN MOTHER' S RESIDENCE (NYT).
US EMBASSY OFFICERS EXPRESS " GRAVE CONCERN" OVER
SECURITY MEASURES BARRING DEPARTURE OF MOST TRAVELLERS
FROM COUNTRY. EMBASSY ALERTS AMERICANS PP PRACTICALLY
SURROUNDED BY REBELS AND WARNS MORE ATTACKS POSSIBLE (WP).

10. SIHANOUK DROPS OUT OF SIGHT, POST' S GREENWAY
REPORTS FROM HONG KONG. HE HASN' T BEEN HEARD FROM
SINCE FEBRUARY 16 WHEN HE WENT TO HAINAN ISLAND.
SOME OBSERVERS SPECULATE HE MAY BE DISCUSSING CAMBODIA
WITH CHOU. TOLD AFP ON JANUARY 26 THAT CHINESE HAD
ADVISED HIM BE LESS BELLICOSE IN PUBLICLY DISCUSSING
FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS LEST HE APPEAR ENDEAVORING WORSEN
CONFLICT (WP).

11. LON NOL MOVES OUT OF PRESIDENTIAL PALACE INTO

HEAVILY DEFENDED VILLA TWO MILES FROM PHNOM PENH CENTER. SEVERAL JOURNALISTS AND OPPOSITION POLITICIANS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED. DIPLOMATIC SOURCES SEE LITTLE EVIDENCE TO LINK POTRA'S BOMBING ATTACK WITH BROADER PLOT TO OVERTHROW LON NOL (SUN). NIXON CABLES EXPRESSION OF " SHOCK AND INDIGNATION" AT BOMBING.

12. NYT'S BROWNE REPORTS FROM VIENTIANE THAT SOUVANNA SENDS THIRD APPEAL TO PL FOR URGENT SETTLEMENT. SOUVANNA MAKES ANNOUNCEMENT ON OCCASION OF VISIT TO VILLAGERS WHO HAD DESTROYED THEIR OPIUM POPPIES AND PROMISED TO BEGIN CULTIVATING RICE INSTEAD. PHENG PHONGSAVAN ACKNOWLEDGES HE HAS HEARD RUMORS OF POSSIBLE RIGHTIST COUP ATTEMPT BUT SAYS RIGHT KNOWS THIS WOULD BE SUICIDE BECAUSE US WOULDN'T SUPPORT IT (NYT).

13. PHINQ NOTES CANADIAN ICCS MEMBERS' CHARGE THAT THEIR COMMUNIST COUNTERPARTS ARE SABOTAGING TRUCE, REFUSE SIGN REPORTS UNFAVORABLE TO NVN OR VC, AND HINDER ICCS FIELD TEAMS FROM COMMUNICATING WITH SAIGON HQS. WHILE WELL AWARE OF VIOLATIONS, PRESIDENT HAS NOT MADE ANY CRITICAL STATEMENT ON FAILURE TO POLICE CEASE- FIRE. CANADIAN FONMIN SHARP HAD PREVIOUSLY WARNED THAT IF ICCS PERFORMANCE WAS AS UNSATISFACTORY AS UNDER 1954 GENEVA AGREEMENTS, CANADA WOULD PULL OUT. ONLY ENCOURAGING FACTOR IS SHARP'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT THAT ALL UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 051209

PARTICIPANTS DESPERATELY WANT CANADA TO STAY.

14. LISAGOR (PHINQ) SEES NIXON'S " GOING PUBLIC" IN WARNING HANOI ABOUT ILLEGAL INFILTRATION OF MEN AND EQUIPMENT AS SUPPLEMENTARY TO PRIVATE REPRESENTATIONS TO HANOI AND " OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES," INCLUDING CHINA AND RUSSIA. INDICATES THAT THESE REPRESENTATIONS WERE DESIGNED TO OFFSET THINKING AMONG CONGRESSIONAL AND DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES THAT NIXON IS UNLIKELY TO RESUME BOMBING AND RISK MORE WAR PRISONERS. SUCH THINKING MIGHT MISGUIDE NVN.

15. JACK ANDERSON (WP) REPORTS THAT ESTIMATED 20,000 CIVILIAN EXPERTS ARE QUIETLY REPLACING MILITARY ADVISERS RETURNING FROM VN. MOST NEW ADVISERS WILL BE RECRUITED FROM ARMED FORCES BUT WILL GO TO SAIGON AS EMPLOYEES OF SUCH CORPORATIONS AS ITT, SPERRY- RAND, LEAR- SIEGLER, NORTHROP AND NHA, INC. SOME WILL REMAIN ON PENTAGON PAYROLL. TO AVOID REPEAT OF AGONY OF POW SITUATION IF CIVILIANS ON PENTAGON PAYROLL ARE CAPTURED BY COMMUNISTS, THESE CIVILIANS ARE - VOLUNTEERS.- CIA- RUN AIR AMERICA AND OTHER QUASI- GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE ENTERPRISES STILL RECRUITING AMERICANS TO SERVE IN LAOS AND CAMBODIA.

16. CLARK US PROFESSOR GOODMAN (CSM) FEELS IMMEDIATE MEANING OF REDEEMING US PLEDGE FOR NVN RECONSTRUCTION LIES IN AREA OF RELIEF AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE. SAYS HAK MEETINGS IN HANOI WERE UNDOUBTEDLY DESIGNED

TO SOUND OUT NVN RECEPTIVITIES RATHER THAN FIRM UP PROGRAM OF ANY APPRECIABLE LONG- TERM SIGNIFICANCE. BASES VIEW ON AIKEN- KENNEDY AMENDMENT VOTE, WHICH SIGNIFIES THAT US WOULD SUPPORT MULTILATERAL UN FUND FOR IMMEDIATE RELIEF, NVN UNWILLINGNESS TO SUBJECT THEMSELVES TO SCRUTINY THAT INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS INVOLVE AND UNCERTAIN OUTCOME OF CEASE- FIRE.

17. STAR- NEWS' BRADSHER (MAR. 19), IN HONG KONG, SEES LON NOL REGIME TOTTERING. WHILE SOME REFORMS URGED BY US HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT, GKR HAS BEEN UNWILLING OR UNABLE TRY TO SAVE ITSELF. US HAS URGED, SOMEWHAT UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 06 STATE 051209

WEAKLY AND INEFFECTUALLY, BROADENING OF REGIME. US EMBASSY THINKS SIRIK MATAK SHOULD BE BROUGHT BACK INTO KEY GOVERNMENTAL ROLE. HOWEVER, LON NOL FLATLY OPPOSES THIS. SECOND PROBLEM, WHICH US OFFICIALS HAVE ALWAYS TENDED TO IGNORE, IS THAT DECLINE BEGAN DURING SIRIK MATAK' S RUNNING GOVERNMENT. IT WAS HE WHO ALIENATED AND DROVE OUT SOME POTENTIAL SUPPORTERS WITH US EMBASSY APPROVAL IN NAME OF " EFFICIENCY" -- RATHER THAN BOTHER WITH DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT.

18. SULZBERGER (S- N, MAR. 19) IN JAKARTA FORESEES ASEAN EMERGING AS REGIONAL FORCE; NEUTRAL, BUT MORE SYMPATHETIC TO US THAN TO EITHER USSR OR CHINA. IN INTERVIEW, SUHARTO SAYS IF NVN AND SVN DECIDE

KEEP SEPARATE GOVERNMENTS IT WOULD BE ADVANTAGEOUS IF THEY JOINED ASEAN. NATIONAL SECURITY IS OBSESSION THAT DOMINATES INDONESIA FOREIGN AND INTERNAL POLICY AND THIS IS LARGELY TRUE FOR ITS ASEAN PARTNERS. SUHARTO SEES CHANCE THAT WHEN SIMILAR VIEWS BEGIN TO PREVAIL IN INDOCHINA, IT, TOO, WILL WANT TO JOIN CLUB ROGERS

UNCLASSIFIED

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 07 MAY 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 MAR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE051209
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: EA/ P: STAFF: PP
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730348/abqceieb.tel
Line Count: 264
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN EA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: cunninfx
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03-Aug-2001 by maustmc>; APPROVED <16-Aug-2001 by cunninfx>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> srp 971215
Subject: MARCH 20 INDOCHINA PRESS SUMMARY
TAGS: PFOR, US, XC
To: SAIGON INFO BANGKOK
PHNOM PENH
VIENTIANE
FRANCE
CINCPAC
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

